

**Long Term Care Coordinating Council**

**January 9th, 2008**

**State House Room 313**

**Providence, RI**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Attendance:**

**Lt. Governor Roberts**

**Director Corinne Calise Russo**

**Senator June Gibbs**

**John Young**

**Elizabeth Morancy**

**Kathleen Heren**

**Karen Amado**

**Mary Benway**

**Cynthia Conant-Arp**

**Bonnie Sekeres**

**Kathleen Carland**

**Sr. Marietta Walsh**

**Maureen Maigret**

**Ray Rusin**

**Virginia Burke**

**Jennifer Wood**

**Paula Parker**

**Christopher Novak**

**Judy Jones**

**Bonnie Larson**

**Joan Kwaitkowski**

**Roberta Merkle**

**Kathleen Kelly**

**Alan Tavares**

**Cynthia Conant-Arp**

**Dan Meuse**

**Brian Monteiro**

**Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts at 10:10 a.m.**

**Minutes of the December 12, 2007 meeting were approved unanimously**

**Chairwoman Roberts called on Ray Rusin for a report on Nursing Facility surveys. Mr. Rusin reported that there were 8 facilities surveyed during December. One facility was found to have no deficiencies. Seven facilities were found to have deficiencies but none resulting in actual harm or substandard care.**

**Chairwoman Roberts asked Mr. Rusin to respond to the council's request on mid-year budget changes from the Department of Health. Mr. Rusin stated that while there is no change in the functions of the facilities regulation division workload, the state hiring freeze is**

causing challenges maintaining survey schedules and monitoring complaints. Chairwoman Roberts asked if the health care quality steering committee is being suspended. Mr. Rusin was not aware of changes to the steering committee, but stated that he will get more information for the council. Chairwoman Roberts asked Mr. Rusin to attend or send another individual in his place to attend so that the council may receive more information on the matter.

Chairwoman Roberts introduced Corinne Russo, Director of Elderly Affairs, to report on mid-year budget changes. Director Russo stated that the department has gone through a public hearing to increase the patient share in the co-pay program for Adult Day Centers and for Home Care. Letters will be sent to participants informing them of the change. Director Russo stated that the department is making the change in an attempt to preserve the critical services and functions to the elderly.

Chairwoman Roberts asked how much income levels are changing for the co-pay program. Director Russo stated that nothing will be changing except the co-pay levels

Director Russo also state that by close of the fiscal year the department will lose at least 6 or 7 employees to retirement that may not be replaced, as well as layoffs from the Governor's personnel savings plan. As of the meeting, the department has 38 FTE's

Director Russo also indicated that the department is looking into

participants sharing the costs of transportation in the RIde program. The share would be paid by all non-Medicaid riders, except those traveling to and from Adult Day Centers. Council members expressed concern that charging up to \$6 for round-trip transportation to a senior meal site will put such a high strain on participants that they may choose to forgo meals because of the cost. Director Russo stated that some cities and towns have their own methods of transportation that may be used to supplement the RIde program. Kathy Carland stated that towns that provide free transportation may be overwhelmed with requests for transportation if there is a charge for the RIde program. Chairwoman Roberts asked if Director Russo could estimate the impact of the cost of the RIde program on other services. Director Russo stated that she is not sure \$3 dollars is the appropriate rate; she states that she would like to work with RIPTA where they could develop a system with an appropriate price.

Maureen Maigret stated that the proposal is a significant policy change affected by two major issues: our population is getting older and the amount of elderly who are near poverty. For the RIde program to continue to serve the population, the state must find an appropriate price. Director Russo stated that she must be able to figure out how to sustain critical services in the community, and at the same time help families to understand that at some point they may have to share cost of services. Cindy Conant-Arp stated that she would like someone to study the impact on clients and agencies before we start making decisions.

**Additionally, the department may change the RIPAE program in FY2009, requiring participants to enroll as a member of a Medicare Part D program.**

**Chairwoman Roberts introduced John Young of the Department of Human Services to discuss mid-year budget changes. Mr. Young stated that one of the cost drivers for the department is emergency room usage in the Medicaid Fee for Service population. One of programs that will be starting in the Fee for Service population is a Managed Care option. Currently, the department offers Connect Care Choice, which provides case management in primary care setting with department assistance. Additionally, later this year, the Fee for Service population can start to enroll in Rhody Health partners, an alternative to Fee for Service using a health plan. Mr. Young stated that of the 18,000 Rhode Islander eligible for these managed care options, approximately 2,000 are expected to join Connect Care Choice and 4,000 – 5,000 are expected to join Rhody Health Partners.**

**Mr. Young also stated that the department is in the process of implementing expedited services regulations to assist in getting persons into home and community based care. The pool to pay for in-eligible persons using expedited services would come from the Perry/Sullivan funds from FY2008.**

**FY2009 proposals include a change to hospital reimbursement**

methods, a limit on nursing facility direct labor reimbursement, and a nursing facility bed buy-back program. Additionally, the FY2009 Perry/Sullivan funds would fund targeted rate increases for providers. Also, CMS has made the decision that Medicaid cannot pay for case managers, even if it is medically motivated, unless case management is specifically part of the program being funded by Medicaid. Chairwoman Roberts asked what the implication of this would be. Mr. Young stated that it is an interim final rule and it will take effect March 1st, and could potentially cost the state \$15-\$20 million.

Chairwoman Roberts stated that the Long Term Care Coordinating Council will have a separate meeting once the budget is officially announced to allow for an in-depth discussion of the issue. Once the budget has been released, the meeting will be arranged.

Chairwoman Roberts stated that she would like to know the members legislative priorities to allow for the council to determine support for the legislation. Maureen Maigret stated that she would like to note that there is nobody in attendance from MHRH.

Chairwoman Roberts thanked Judy Jones for her hard work at Rhode Island Housing and congratulated her on her retirement.

Virginia Burke, the new President and CEO of the Rhode Island Health Care Association, introduced herself to the group.

**Chairwoman Roberts adjourned the meeting at 11:39am.**